

S E C R E T

21 MAR 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for Operations

FROM:

Chief, Latin America Division

SUBJECT: Soviet Military Assistance to Bolivia

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum dtd 15 March 1985 re Telephone Conversation with

To the best of our knowledge, there is no Soviet military assistance program in Bolivia, although there is a relatively large Soviet civilian presence.

--There are two military attaches (one Army, one Air Force) at the Soviet Embassy among the 75 to 100 PCS Soviet personnel stationed in Bolivia. Both these attaches are considered GRU by virtue of their position. There are also five KGB officers assigned to the Embassy.

--We have no information from any source that the Soviets are expanding their military activities beyond normal attache levels, although we assume they have made offers to do so.

--As an institution, the Bolivian military is generally pro-U.S. and anti-Communist.

Extensive commercial and development pacts between the USSR and Bolivia accounts for the large Soviet civilian presence.

--The Soviets have long-term ties to the Bolivian tin industry, and have significant investments in two experimental tin smelting operations, one on-line and one under construction.

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--During the summer of 1984, the Soviets pressed for construction and manning of a large farm tractor factory, based on a raw materials barter agreement. This arrangement was not finalized, probably due to the ineptness of the current Bolivian administration.

--The Soviets also recently offered to provide the commercial version of the AN-24 to Bolivian air transport companies, but this too came to naught.

--At the moment, the Soviets are engaged in an extensive effort to finalize an Aeroflot commercial aviation service agreement with Bolivia for landing rights in La Paz and Santa Cruz.

--The Soviets have two satellite tracking stations in Bolivia. One is at Patacamaya, and a newer, more modern one at Tarija. Both are frequently visited by TDY personnel from the USSR.

Both the Novosti and Tass news agencies are represented in Bolivia, and Bolivian press and television frequently run pro-Moscow items. The Soviets also provide scholarships to Bolivian students to attend school in the Soviet Union.

--Roughly 75 to 100 Bolivian students travel to the USSR each year for long-term study.

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(20 March 1985)

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